

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS

Heroes Suffer Too

Thank you for your heroic actions.

Though the initial and expected reaction during an emergency is to focus on the well-being of the victims, it is important to be aware of the lasting effects a traumatic event can have on those individuals who selflessly offered their help in a time of need.

As time passes you may find that your exposure to a traumatic and possibly tragic event is affecting you in unexpected ways; please keep the following information for your reference should you begin to exhibit symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress.

Should you have any questions, you are encouraged to consult with your family physician or seek professional help.

SIGNS OF

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS

Re-Experiencing Symptoms

- Frequently having upsetting thoughts or memories about a traumatic event.
- Having recurring nightmares.
- Acting or feeling as though the traumatic event were happening again, sometimes called a “flashback.”
- Having strong feelings of distress when reminded of the traumatic event.
- Being physically responsive, such as experiencing a surge in your heart rate or sweating, to reminders of the traumatic event.

Avoidance Symptoms

- Making an effort to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations about the traumatic event.
- Making an effort to avoid places or people that remind you of the traumatic event.
- Having a difficult time remembering important parts of the traumatic event.
- A loss of interest in important, once positive, activities.
- Feeling distant from others.
- Experiencing difficulties having positive feelings, such as happiness or love.
- Feeling as though your life may be cut short.

Hyperarousal Symptoms

- Having a difficult time falling or staying asleep.
- Feeling more irritable or having outbursts of anger.
- Having difficulty concentrating.
- Feeling constantly “on guard” or like danger is lurking around every corner.
- Being “jumpy” or easily startled.

Changes in Habits

- Requiring substances (alcohol, drugs) to help you calm down
- Using sleeping pills (prescribed) to help you rest or deal with nightmares
- Use of additional volumes of regular medications to deal with medical conditions
- Pulling into yourself and away from friends or family
- Constant feeling of doom and gloom that was not present before

Help *is* available:

Local Crisis and Mental Health Lines

Your local Fire Department – has access to and knows consellers who have helped their members handle situations like this.

RCMP and Police Victims Services – understand that traumatic events happen and that you need to talk. They can be reached through the nearest local RCMP or police detachments. You can also call 1-800-563-0808 for local contact information for your area.

Local Crisis and Mental Health Lines have people ready to listen and talk anytime you need. They also have access to many more resources and services. They are province specific and can be reached at the following numbers:

Alberta: (877) 303-2642

Manitoba: (204) 953-2350

Newfoundland and Labrador:
(877) 753-8550

St. John's Area Mental Health Crisis Line: (888) 737-4668

Nova Scotia: (877) 466-6006

P.E.I.: (902) 566-3034

Quebec: (514) 849-3291

Ontario: (866) 531-2600

Saskatchewan: (800) 461-5483

New Brunswick: (506) 455-5231

Nunavut: (877) 212-6438

British Columbia: (800) 661-2121

Northwest Territories:
(800) 661-0844
Crisis line: (867) 669-4111

Yukon: (800) 661-0408